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AUTHOR Wright, Gary R.
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ABSTRACT

This document presents an overview of the Jamesville-DeWitt-Syracuse University Teaching Center. Founded in 1975, the Teaching Center has two major foci--the provision of personalized and individualized field experience for the preservice university student and ongoing inservice teacher staff development. The paper describes the conceptual bases underlying both of these missions and methods developed for bringing these concepts into actuality. Organization of the Center Directing Council and Consortia Coordinating Council are described. Recommendations drawn from Center experience are offered as guidelines for the development of other successful centers. (MJB)

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TEACHING CENTER

JAMESVILLE-DeWITT CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

Moses-DeWitt School, Jamesville Rd., DeWitt, New York 13214 446-1512

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TEACHING CENTERS
A STUDY IN PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

PRESENTED TO THE

ASSOCIATION OF TEACHER EDUCATORS

FEBRUARY 1978

LAS VEGAS NEVADA

BY

GARY R. WRIGHT, Ph.D.

COORDINATOR

JAMESVILLE-DeWITT-SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY

TEACHING CENTER

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
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The average age of today's public school teacher is just under forty years old and over eighty percent are permanently certified. Given our present retirement system it is possible that over half of today's educators will continue teaching into the twenty first century with no mandatory retraining.

This point has been recognized by many educators and lawmakers with the results being the recently enacted Teaching Center legislation. The intent and purpose of this law is to upgrade staff development programs on the local level.

But how does one go about assessing staff development needs, developing and delivering responsive programs and evaluating these programs? What does a teaching center look like, who governs it and of what does its day to day operative consist? The Jamesville-DeWitt-Syracuse University Teaching Center has confronted and, hopefully, answered these questions that the multitude of future teaching centers will soon face.

The Jamesville-DeWitt/Syracuse University Teaching Center is a corporate type teaching center. It is concerned with both preservice and inservice education. This arrangement is such that the university is assured of constructive field placements with full time site coordinators, cooperative planning with the clinical teachers and systematic efforts to train supervising teachers.

The school district benefits from having inservice activities directed toward emerging needs of the professional staff offered in the center for university credit. Thus the relationship is truly symbiotic for all partners benefit from the arrangement.

The framework underlining our teaching center concept is to develop an improved teacher education program through shared responsibility of Jamesville-DeWitt and Syracuse University, using the following intentions and practices:

a. to cooperatively design, implement and evaluate model teacher education programs.

b. to integrate theory and practice, the on-campus with off-campus, and the preservice with the inservice.

c. to articulate the theoretical teacher education faculty (college) with the clinical teacher education faculty (school) in such ways that they work together at the same time, in the same place on common instruction and supervisory problems.

d. to work jointly on improvement of instructional programs provided to the District's students through making available University personnel, as consultants to Center staff meetings, workshops, seminars.

e. to analyze objectively and systematically what goes on in the classroom and to develop specific goal-oriented strategies for teaching and supervision.

f. to further coordinate preservice and inservice teacher training.

g. to individualize professional development--for pre-professionals as well as for practicing professionals.

h. to utilize alternative modes (e.g., educational technology, micro-teaching, and cognitive and affective systems) for analyzing and improving teaching.

In general, the program is a vehicle whereby individuals and/or teams of individuals focus on the study of teaching and learning. Through both informal and formal means, they become better and more effective teachers of children as well as better and more effective teachers of teachers.

The preservice component of the Center is designed to provide a personalized and individualized field experience program for the University students. The Coordinator of Field Experience at the University will work in conjunction with the Center Coordinator and the principals of the Center schools to decide the number of students and criteria for entrance of students into the Center for their field experiences. The students are assigned to the Center by the University Office of Field Experiences and specifics of the field experience placement within the Center are worked out by the principals and Coordinator, classroom teachers and University personnel. For field experiences outside the Center schools, arrangements are made through the Center Coordinator and the Coordinator and the Coordinator of Field Experiences. When preservice students are assigned, the Center teachers share with University personnel in building an individualized set of experiences for each of the students that may draw upon the strengths of all teachers within the Center schools. Students spend varying amounts of time with teachers in the participating schools dependent upon the needs of the student's program. This means a new configuration of short and long term field experience placements depending upon the needs of the personnel and resources available to the Center.

Not all of the experiences involve classroom experiences or direct contact with children. Students will engage in seminars, independent study and materials examinations and development at the Center.

The process of establishing a collaborative CBTE program has been a joint stride in professionalizing the training of teachers. But these attempts to design model teacher preparation programs have been criticized. A method we use in making this operational is devising a contract for each preservice student regardless of program. Competencies from CBTE programs can very easily be transformed into "acceptable" activities to be performed in the classroom. This provides an individual prescription for each of our preservice students. This contract drawn up by the preservice student, the cooperating teacher and the center supervisor is also a focus for supervision as well as a means of evaluation.

The other major focus of the Teaching Center is the ongoing staff development program. This program of the Teaching Center is strengthened by the Inservice Committee. This advising council, a majority of which are classroom teachers, provide valuable input to the staff development program as well as establishing a proceedure for deciding the offerings of the Center.

In order to make sense out of the mess that is often referred to as staff development, I think it wise to differentiate between the catagories of staff development. There are of course several ways of categorizing these programs and can include:

1. Institutional Type- Which is exemplified when the school district as a whole is moving in a pre-determined direction and this movement could be facilitated by some form of instruction, ie, mainstreaming.
2. Professional Type- Is demonstrated by a professional employee when he selects to partake in instruction to acquire, reinforce or update skills so that he can grow professionaly, ie-typical university course.
3. Situational staff development programs are usually precipitated by a crisis or abrupt change which calls forth with an immediate need that must be satisfied, ie-preparing the staff for changes resulting from forced busing or decreasing enrollment.
4. Personal or recreational staff development programs are designed (to satisfy) an employe's need for personal growth. No doubt these needs effect him as a teacher as well as an individual. Examples could be travel, wine tasting, arts and crafts.

For a center to fulfill its change in each of these areas it is vitally important that data be gathered from the staff and analized in each of the above categories. If this is done, it is all too probable that the program offerings will be tailored to suit

the needs and interests of the director rather than the staff. Also, the salesman effect might take place, that is expediency may interfere with offerings in that an available consultant or program might be pushed on the staff simply because they are available.

In order to prevent either of these potentially damaging but expedient events from occurring we assess needs in the following ways.

1. By having representation on and feedback from the districts long range development team. We are prepared to assist the district to move in the desired direction as spelled out by their long range plans.
2. Formal needs assesment instruments are collaboratively designed by the university and the school district. These instruments are administered by our preservice and inservice committies who analyze the data and make appropriate recommendations.
3. Monthly sampling of the faculty through our newsletter to provide input as to their needs and request for courses, speakers and workshops.
4. Casual sampling of the staff through conversations.

The mechanism we use to formulate and structure staff development programs is the inservice committee.

This is a standing committee of our directing council and meets monthly in order to report and make recommendations to the council. In fulfilling its charge this committee will analyze available data and recommend to the council a method of fulfilling this analyzed need.

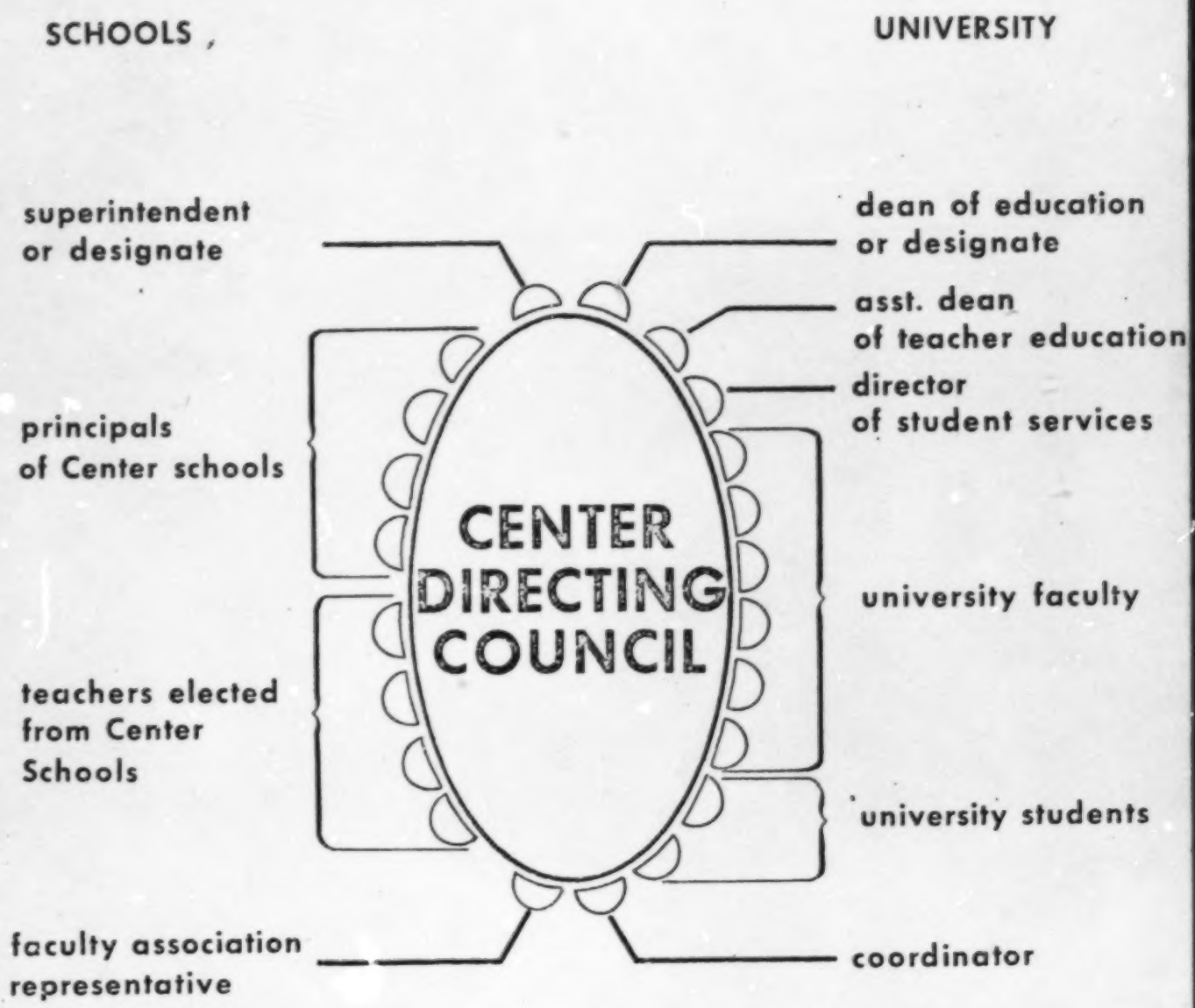
This proceedure includes a program development packet which was distributed to each teacher in the participating schools. The purpose of the packet is to provide each teacher with an opportunity to identify a particular type of programmatic offering they felt should be offered. The Inservice Committee then screended the request. The Center Coordinator established a conference with the individuals who submitted the request deemed feasiable by the committee. The format, whether workshop, course, consultation, mini course, speaker or seminar was then planned in its entirety including proposed competencies, processes, assessments instructional personnel and logistical details plus credit bearing-non credit bearing-non credit-formal-informal modularized. As a result of this information received through this packet and other feedback, the committee suggests which workshop, speakers, or courses be sponsored by the Center.

Collaboration is the keystone of the Syracuse University-Jamesville-DeWitt, Teaching Center. By collaboration we mean cooperation and much more; we mean a partnership in teacher education.

Who are the partners and how are they represented? In order to assure all constitutencies are represented, we operate under the following model for composition of the coordinating council.

Center-Coordinator

District-Superintendent (or his designated continuing representative), the principal of each participating school and one teacher from each participating school.


SCHOOLS
UNIVERSITY
superintendent or designate
principals of Center schools
teachers elected from Center Schools
faculty association representative
dean of education or designate
asst. dean of teacher education
director of student services
university faculty
university students
coordinator
CENTER DIRECTING COUNCIL

University--Dean of the School of Education, Director of Educational Services (or their designated continuing representative), five faculty members and two students.

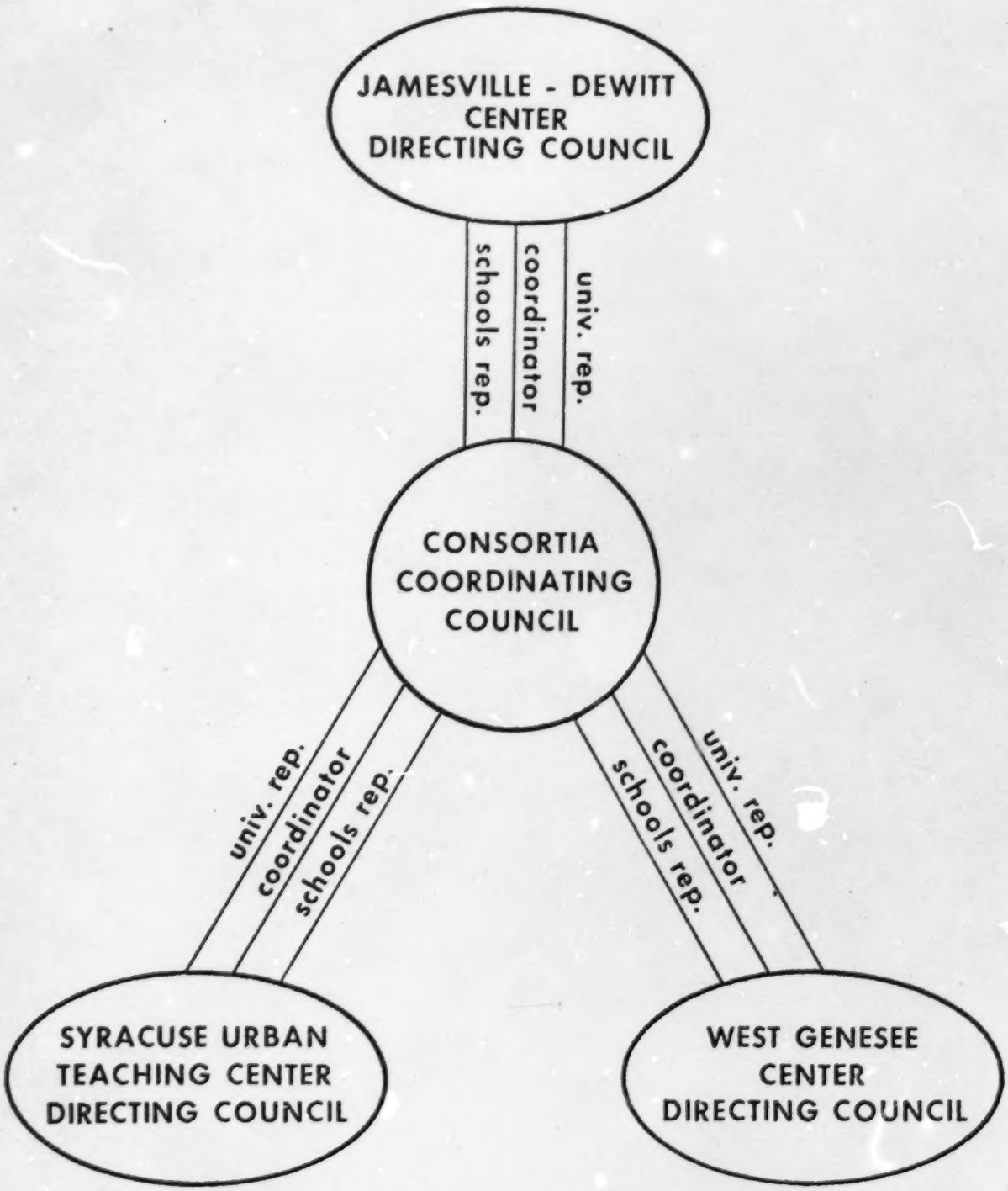
Most members serve for a full academic year. Student membership may change from semester to semester. Each institution determines its procedure for selecting representatives.

Meetings of the Council may be attended by other interested persons at the invitation of the Coordinator or Council members.

In addition to the Center Coordinating Council we also have a vehicle for coordinating the efforts of all three councils. This we refer to as the Consortia Coordinating Council or CCC its members are made up of three representatives of each of the Teaching Center Councils including Public School Representatives-Coordinators and University Representatives This council meets monthly to attack common problems as well as provide coordination in inservice-preservice and research activities.

The Jamesville DeWitt-Syracuse University Teaching Center is in its third year of operation. The operation of the center is evaluated on a continual basis and is formally reported yearly. These reports contain a thorough evaluation of both the preservice and staff development componets. This data is available from the prespective of the teachers, building administration, district administration, student teachers, university faculty, university administration and the center staff.

The evaluations are based primarily upon the intended outcomes of the program as stated in the Center agreement form. While a major portion of the items were taken directly from the agreement form, some items have also been included to provide respondents the opportunity to express general feelings about the operation of the Center.


JAMESVILLE - DEWITT
CENTER
DIRECTING COUNCIL
schools rep.
coordinator
univ. rep.
CONSORTIA
COORDINATING
COUNCIL
univ. rep.
coordinator
schools rep.
schools rep.
coordinator
univ. rep.
SYRACUSE URBAN
TEACHING CENTER
DIRECTING COUNCIL
WEST GENESEE
CENTER
DIRECTING COUNCIL

In addition space for written comments is provided.

Data is gathered on the perceived effectiveness of:

The Inservice Activities

The Center Coordinator

The Cooperating Teachers

The Building Principals

The Preservice Students

The University

The General Center Operation

Our experience leads me to offer this advise for future centers.

1. To have a successful collaborative process trust must be nurtured.
2. The Center should be a place as well as a concept.
3. Inservice activities should begin immediately after the Center formally begins operation.
4. Staff must be highly visible.
5. Teachers must be involved in planning inservice.
6. The University staff should make periodic visits to the field setting.
7. The structure should provide the coordinator the freedom to make necessary decisions to keep the project moving.